

## Test Anxiety

As we approach the end of the school year, we begin to think about summer, friends and plans for our free time. But before we get to those lazy days of summer we have to get through those dreaded final exams. As the days count down, many students become anxious and nervous about their exams and experience test anxiety. Some level of anxiety is normal. It can range from uneasiness to apprehension, to severe concern, worries and fear that results in becoming physically ill and/or experiencing mental blocks.

The best way to battle this anxiety is to BE PREPARED. Before exams you need to take steps to prepare yourself not only academically, but also physically and emotionally.

Academically, you need to keep up with the work and avoid "cramming" for the exams. Become efficient in your study habits, create a schedule and be organized with the work. The more prepared you are with the information, the less anxious you will become.

Physically, you need to get enough sleep, eat a healthy diet, exercise and make sure you take time to rest. Take study breaks and relax yourself and your mind to make sure the information is getting absorbed. Never pull the "all nighter". Make sure you get a good night's sleep and eat a healthy breakfast to give yourself the energy you will need to get through the test.

Emotionally, you need to think positively. If you have done the other steps of preparation this part will be easy. Make sure to focus only on the exam you are taking, take time before the exam to calm yourself down and breath, taking deep breathes during the test to keep yourself calm and focused. Once the exam is over, treat yourself and take a break before you begin studying for the next test.



## What's the Deal with Water?

Our bodies are 50-60% water by weight. That means that without water, we can't live. So it is extremely important to get plenty of water during the day. We need 6-8 cups of water a day to keep our water in balance. Our body uses water for many processes. We use it in digestion, respiration (breathing), sweat, and is a very important part of cellular structure (especially the skin), just to name a few.

So, don't ignore your thirst. Be sure to drink plenty of water especially before and during spring and summer sports.

## Make good Decisions: Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco

Your best chance to avoid addictions and the problems that result from drugs is to say "No". Choosing not to use drugs keeps you in control of your mind, body and future!

Drugs and alcohol can make you:

- Do embarrassing things or things you wouldn't otherwise do, like have sex..
- Lose friends and respect.
- Look and feel awful.
- Get into fights or conflicts.
- Feel sick or even kill you.



Tobacco products aren't any safer. All tobacco products have nicotine which is a drug that is as addictive as cocaine and heroin. Smokers as young as 18 have shown signs of heart disease. Cigarettes cost about \$1000/year, for the pack-a-day smoker. Smokeless tobacco can cause cancer of the mouth, tongue and throat.



### Sunlight: So Bright!

The sun is important for its light and warmth. It feels good on our skin, but too much sun exposure results in sunburn and can lead to serious long-term effects. Too much sun damages our skin and our eyes.

Sun related skin cancer is the most common form of cancer. So what can we do to protect ourselves?

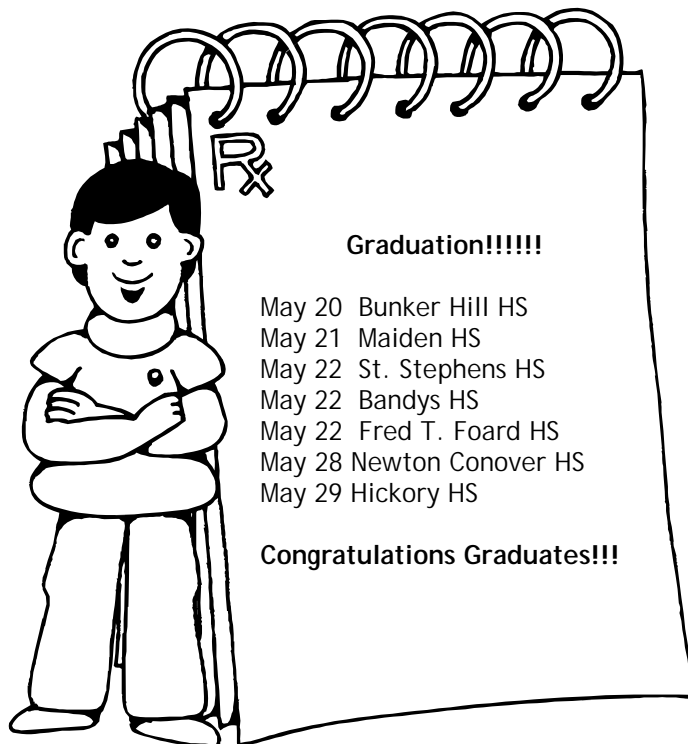
- Avoid the sun between 10 AM and 4 PM.
- Practice the shadow rule. If your shadow is shorter than you, the sun's rays are at their strongest. Look for shade!
- Use sunscreen and lots of it!
- Wear sunglasses with 99-100% UV absorption.

Now, what about those tanning beds? They are safe, right? Wrong!

Tanning beds use ultraviolet light for tanning too! Any long-term exposure to ultraviolet radiation can increase your risk for cancer. Experts say that skin cancer cases have been rising every year due to exposure from the sun, tanning beds and sun lamps.

"But, I need sun to make Vitamin D!" That is partially true. We do need sunlight to make Vitamin D, but much less than it would take to get a suntan.

So, be smart!! Protect yourself!



### Unfiltered Facts

- U** Understand that many people have successfully quite smoking.
- N** Never give up on trying to quit smoking.
- F** Find people who will support you in your efforts to quit.
- I** Ignore all tobacco advertising that glamorize smoking.
- L** Learn more about the harmful effects of tobacco use.
- T** Talk to people who have been affected by tobacco use.
- E** Exercise to maintain a strong healthy body and mind.
- R** Read books that will help you grow mentally and spiritually.
- E** Eat food that are lower in fat to avoid weight gain.
- D** Deep breathing will help you to relax when you're stressed.
- F** Faith allows you to believe that nothing is impossible.
- A** Accept the fact that quitting smoking will be hard.
- C** Control your urge to smoke by drinking lots of water.
- T** Think positive and believe in yourself.
- S** Stay away from people who smoke.



"Keep away from small people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."

Mark Twain

Did you know that your body can lose from 30-300% more water in the heat of the summer? If you are outside for long periods of time during the heat of the afternoon, you may lose 4 cups (or more if you are engaging in strenuous exercise) of water in sweat.